

MINUTES

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 57th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Call to Order: By **CHAIRMAN STEVE VICK**, on February 12, 2001 at 3:00 P.M., in Room 102 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. Steve Vick, Chairman (R)
Rep. Dave Lewis, Vice Chairman (R)
Rep. Matt McCann, Vice Chairman (D)
Rep. John Brueggeman (R)
Rep. Rosalie (Rosie) Buzzas (D)
Rep. Tim Callahan (D)
Rep. Edith Clark (R)
Rep. Bob Davies (R)
Rep. Stanley Fisher (R)
Rep. Dick Haines (R)
Rep. Joey Jayne (D)
Rep. Dave Kasten (R)
Rep. Christine Kaufmann (D)
Rep. Monica Lindeen (D)
Rep. Jeff Pattison (R)
Rep. Art Peterson (R)
Rep. Joe Tropila (D)
Rep. John Witt (R)

Members Excused: None.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Paula Broadhurst, Committee Secretary
Taryn Purdy, Legislative Branch

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing(s) & Date(s) Posted: HB 65 HB 232 HB 503, 2/12/01.
Executive Action: None.

HEARING ON HB 65

Sponsor: Rep. Bob Lawson, HD 80.

Proponents: Erik Burke, MEA-MFT; Yogi Lynne Khalsa, STEP at MSU in Bozeman; Patty Mier, STEP; Marlo Blewett, STEP; Linda Adelson, STEP; Bill Cooper, Office of Public Instruction; Bob Vogel, Montana School Boards Association.

Opponents: None.

Informational Witnesses: None.

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

Rep. Bob Lawson said HB 65 is an act establishing a mentoring or induction grant program for first-time or novice public school teachers. He explained the details of the bill. He explained the details of the fiscal note.

Proponents' Testimony:

Erik Burke said half of his job at MEA-MFT is related to professional development of educators throughout the state. Mentoring is one of the tools that work for professional development and has a profound impact on the quality of teaching in the classroom and recruitment and retention of first year teachers. This bill helps first-year teachers with their workload.

Yogi Lynne Khalsa said she supports mentoring for early career teachers in our state. She explained preparation in a teachers day.

Patty Mier said she has taught for 22 years. She said when she first got into teaching years ago how a mentoring program would have helped her.

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Marlo Blewett said she is an early career teacher and has been teaching for 3 years. She spoke of personal experiences during her first year teaching.

Linda Adelson said she has taught regular and special education and now she is the evaluator for the STEP Program at MSU. For most educators concerns the first few years are keeping their heads above water, struggling to learn new curriculum, developing

lesson plans and dealing with behavioral issues, etc. She supports HB 65.

Bill Cooper said OPI is working with Erik Burke and the Governors Office on professional development. They support HB 65.

Bob Vogel said they support HB 65. They are facing many problems with recruitment and retention of Montana school teachers and administrators. He said mentoring is an extremely important tool for them.

Opponents' Testimony: None.

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

Rep. Kasten asked **Mr. Cooper** what OPI could do in referring to teacher mentoring without a bill like this. **Mr. Cooper** said the OPI's role in this bill would be to develop the guidelines that the districts would consider as they apply and what kinds of things they would have to do.

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Rep. Witt asked **Mr. Cooper** looking at the size of the OPI budget and the number of staff, if this bill passed, what would OPI do. **Mr. Cooper** said he did not think quality mentoring, which is needed in all these schools can happen without putting money in.

Rep. McCann asked **Rep. Lawson** how the grants are formulated and put into the communities. **Rep. Lawson** said a group of school districts get together and come up with an application using guidelines from the Department of Public Instruction. They then apply to the Department of Public Instruction for the grants and the money comes back to the local school districts.

Rep. Haines asked **Mr. Cooper** if this was low priority for OPI. **Mr. Cooper** said their highest priority is to have adequate funding for schools, second priority is to have money allocated for them to do school improvement programs of which mentoring could be a part.

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Rep. Fisher asked **Mr. Burke** how he justified the benefits of this program to teachers who have been within his organization in the last 3, 5, 10 or 20 years and who won't receive the benefits this bill would grant. **Mr. Burke** said no, this bill does the opposite. There are no steps and ladders in the teaching profession itself.

Rep. Peterson asked **Mr. Burke** who should mentor and who should pay for it. **Mr. Burke** said they tried to come up with a system that would be locally driven. The money would flow out to the districts and out to the communities to be put in mentoring programs they thought would work. They believe retired teachers throughout the state are wonderful resources.

Rep. Vick said maybe this is a project the MEA-MFT should take on and not ask the state to do it.

Rep. Buzzas asked **Mr. Cooper** if he could describe how the majority of the money would go out to districts or those who apply. **Mr. Cooper** said the vast majority would go directly to schools who are interested in applying an instituted program. The salary for a half-time person and a little bit of operation money is the only money that would stay in OPI.

Closing by Sponsor:

Rep. Lawson said there are different programs that work on mentoring. The process needs to be formalized and money needs to be provided. The vast majority of the money goes to the local school districts. He urged support for HB 65.

HEARING ON HB 232

Sponsor: Rep. Bob Lawson, HD 80.

Proponents: Tom Bilodeau, MEA-MFT; Bob Vogel, Montana School Board Association.

Opponents: None.

Informational Witnesses: None.

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

Rep. Bob Lawson said this bill is an act allowing a school district to include all district personnel in a compensated absence liability fund, **EXHIBIT**(aph35a01).

Proponents' Testimony:

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Tom Bilodeau said this legislation is important for fiscal integrity of many school districts that are now on the edge of a retirement wave. At the time of retirement, employees generally

have a severance package available to them that is mostly made up of payoff of unused sick leave. This is good business and he said they are not the expenditure of any more dollars in the end. It is putting aside money for a cost already accrued.

Bob Vogel said this proposal was brought forth by the Polson School District originally, but it was unanimously approved statewide by all of member school districts and all the trustee's that attend those meetings. This bill would amend the statutes so that all school districts employees are covered under Compensated Absence Liability Fund.

Opponents' Testimony: None.

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

{Tape : 2; Side : A; Approx. Time Counter : 17.3}

Rep. Lewis made a statement on the bill.

Closing by Sponsor:

Rep. Lawson said this bill is good business, it makes good common sense. It allows for future planning and it doesn't require anything of anybody. He urged support of HB 232.

HEARING ON HB 503

Sponsor: Rep. Buzzas, HD 65.

Proponents: Senator Bohlinger, SD 7; Reverend Jack Preston, Governors Aids Advisory Council.

Opponents: None.

Informational Witnesses: None.

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

Rep. Buzzas said she would like Senator Bohlinger to open on the bill.

Proponents' Testimony:

Senator Bohlinger said he was there to talk about HIV and AIDS funding. He spoke about the AIDS disease. HIV is one of the top

priorities of the Montana Health Agenda. Presently the only funding that is received in Montana comes from federal dollars in the amount of \$500,000. They are currently using all of the funding money to serve about 50 people, but need more funding. On behalf of the Governors Aide Advisory Council he asked the legislature and the State of Montana to appropriate \$100,000 towards the state's efforts to confront this problem. Providing money for medication allows people to remain healthy and productive.

Reverend Jack Preston said he is on the Governors Aide Task Force and spoke of personal experiences with the disease.

{Tape : 2; Side : B; Approx. Time Counter : 0.3}

Opponents' Testimony: None.

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

Rep. McCann asked **Rep. Buzzas** if they were to appropriate \$100,000, would this compensate the program 20%. **Rep. Buzzas** said that was correct, the population of people in Montana that are HIV positive and receiving some kind of assistance.

Rep. McCann asked **Kathleen Martin, Department of Health and Human Services** if there are people right now not receiving medications to help them. **Ms. Martin** said they have 55 people on the Ryan White program that is directly paying for their medications. There are 32 people on the Medicaid program, who receive their treatment through Medicaid. There are a couple hundred people more in Montana that have HIV.

Rep. Witt asked **Ms. Martin** about the numbers she spoke about. **Ms. Martin** said the number of AIDS cases in Montana is declining and the number of deaths from AIDS is declining.

{Tape : 2; Side : B; Approx. Time Counter : 10.4}

Rep. Witt asked **Ms. Martin** if most of these people have a \$500 deductible. **Ms. Martin** said they do look at whether or not a person has viable insurance that will cover their treatment and they do assess things such as deductibles.

Rep. Peterson asked **Ms. Martin** how she would assess this in terms of emphysema, and if programs are available to those people. **Ms. Martin** said she is not sure if there is a separate program for persons with emphysema. The difference between that disease and HIV is, HIV is communicable.

Rep. Haines made a statement to **Ms. Martin** about the budget of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Closing by Sponsor:

Rep. Buzzas spoke of a personal experience in her family with AIDS. She urged support of HB 503.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 4:50 P.M.

REP. STEVE VICK, Chairman

PAULA BROADHURST, Secretary
Transcribed by Donna Huffman

SV/PB/DH

EXHIBIT (aph35aad)